MAHAVIRA AND HIS PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

By
A. N. UPADHYE, M.A., D.LITT.

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THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE
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PREFACE

Ideological differences and lack of adequate acquaintance with each other's life and culture have left a gap between contemporary peoples which steadily increasing opportunities for travel and for trade may yet take some time to bridge. The Indian Institute of Culture has set itself the task of doing what it can to help to bridge the gaps between the divided segments of world culture in our day.

Spreading acquaintance with recent cultural achievements in different parts of the world, forms, however, only part of its prescription for world unity and peace. It recognizes as of at least equal importance with the horizontal or spatial approach to culture, the vertical or temporal one; the assuring that the achievements of the human spirit in past ages shall not slip into oblivion, leaving ourselves and posterity the poorer.

The Institute therefore arranges from time to time to have presented from its platform past formulations of truth the influence of which is still potent in the consciousness of one or many peoples. There is no monopoly of great ideas or of the inspiration of nobility. Hence the observance by the Institute of the anniversaries of great men, including those around the living truth of whose message religions have crystallized. Among these is the great Jain teacher, Mahavira, whose birth anniversary the Institute celebrated with a special meeting on April 23rd, sponsored jointly by it and the Jain Mission Society, Bangalore.

This lecture on "Mahavira and His Philosophy of Life" was delivered on that occasion by Prof. A. N. Upadhye, M.A., D.LITT., who heads the Department of Ardhamagadhi in the Rajaram College, Kolhapur.

Professor N. A. Nikam, M.A., of the Maharaja's College, Mysore, who presided, said that Mahavira, like the Buddha and the Upanishadic seers, had been a unifying force. The Indian historical sense differed from that of the West. To Indians the self-transformation achieved by Mahavira and the Buddha was more important than were dates. The tents of Jainism, he said, were of value in everyday life; and the doctrines of Non-Violence and Tolerance were applicable in international politics and of importance for peaceful coexistence.

MAHAVIRA AND HIS PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

The quest for the Higher on an intellectual or metaphysical plane has been all along, in India, the privilege or province of some outstanding individual or individuals, while the mass of the population, generally steeped in ignorance and poverty, was devoted to crude deification and ancestor-worship. The power of a religious leader lay in his ability to win over to his creed the people around him. In India there have been two types of religious leader: the Priest, and the Ascetic.

The priest was a champion of ritualism. He 'vigorously claimed that the welfare and indeed the very existence of the world, including even the gods, depended upon the maintenance of their systems of sacrifice, which grew to immense size and complexity.' The cults popularised by him were polytheistic; the deities were very often forces of nature; and man was put at their utter mercy, the priest alone being capable of saving him by seeking the favour of the deities through sacrificial rites. This is the line of thought of the Vedic religion and its custodians. It came into India from outside, from the North-West. And, thanks to the mesmeric power exerted by elaborate ritual, it gradually spread towards the East and the South, catching handfuls of followers here and there.

As distinguished from this, in the East, along the fertile banks of the Ganges and the Jumna, there flourished in India a succession of ascetic Teachers, who, hailing from rich families, had enough leisure for high thinking and religious meditation. For them, the spirit in man, and also in all animate beings, was the focus of religious meditation as well as an object of investigation in relation to all that is inanimate in the universe. This brought them face to face with the problem of life here and elsewhere, since both spirit and matter were real for them—real, and therefore essentially eternal, though passing through the flux of change. Life here and hereafter was the result of the beginningless connection between spirit and matter, which was the source of all the misery in this world; and the aim of religion was to separate matter from spirit, so that the latter might achieve a state of liberation in which it would exist in a plenitude of purity, bliss and knowledge. Man is his own master; his thoughts, words and acts have made him, and continue to make him, what he is; it is in his hands to make or mar his present or future; the great Teachers of the past are his ideals to inspire him along the path of religion; and he has to struggle, with hope, on the well-trodden path of spiritual progress, following a code of moral and ascetic discipline, till he reaches the goal of spiritual Emancipation or perfection.

Thus it will be seen that here, in the Eastern stream of religious thought, there is no place either for a Deity who shapes the universe and meddles in its matters, or for a priest invested with mysterious powers to propitiate Him. This line of thought is well represented by Jaina Tīrthankaras like Neminātha, Pārśva and Mahāvīra, by Ājīvika Teachers like Gosāla, by Sāṁkhya philosophers like Kapila and promulgators of Buddhism like Buddha.

With the political freedom of our land, there is great enthusiasm all over the country, particularly patent and eloquent among the educated classes who have started revaluing the ancient Indian heritage in a new perspective. It is in the fitness of things that great personalities like Mahāvīra and Buddha are remembered with reverence in this context. I have often wondered how these great Teachers, whose preachings have such an abiding human appeal, could have been somewhat neglected for some time in the very land which they enriched and elevated in its moral stature. It is, however, a happy augury that their greatness is being appreciated to-day all the more. As usual, it is an irony with us, that Western scholarship has to make us aware of the greatness of our men and matters. Very valuable work in the fields of Jaina and Buddhist literatures was done by Western savants; and to-day, we are in a position to appreciate the greatness of Mahāvīra and Buddha, better than we could do in earlier days.

As a sign of the new spirit, the 2500th Parinirvāṇa Day of Buddha is being celebrated this year; besides, the Jayantī days of Mahāvīra and Buddha are celebrated all over the country every year now. To-day happens to be the the Mahāvīra Jayantī Day. And it is but natural that I should address you in detail on the personality of and principles preached by Mahāvīra.

Mahāvīra was a contemporary of Buddha, and he stands as the 24th Tīrthankara whose preachings fully breathe the spirit of what I have called the Eastern stream of thought in India. All that Mahāvīra and his predecessors have preached goes under the name of Jainism to-day, but that should not come in the way of our appreciating and putting into practice the great principles preached by Mahāvīra which stand to-day embedded and elaborately interpreted in Jaina literature in different languages.

Those of you who have visited Bihar can testify to the fertility of that part of India; but more than that, in the history of Indian thought and culture Bihar has played an important rôle. The great champions of Ātma philosophy like Buddha, Janaka and Mahāvīra hail from this part. It is Mithilā in Bihar that has made substantial contributions to Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems. Some 2500 years ago, Vaiśāli (modern Basārh, some 30 miles to the north of Patna) was a prosperous capital. A suburb of it was called Kuṇḍapura or Kṣatriyakuṇḍa; and here in the palace of King Sidahārtha of his queen Triśalā or Priyakāriṇi Mahāvīra was born: to emphasise his various outstanding traits, he was also known as Jñāta-putra, Vaiśālīya,

Vardhamāna, Sanmati, etc. His mother belonged to the family of Ceṭaka, the mighty Licchavī ruler of Videha at whose call Licchavis and Mallas co-operated both for defence and offence. Tradition is not unanimous about his marriage: according to the one, he was a celibate throughout; while according to another, he married Yaśodā and had a daughter called Priyadarśanā. As a prince, having excellent connections with ruling dynasties of his times, it was expected of him to rule with authority and enjoy the pleasures of a prosperous career after his father. But that was not to be. Just at the age of 30, Mahāvīra decided like a hero to relinquish the comforts of a princely life and undertook the life of an ascetic with a view to attain spiritual happiness, and thus place before the world the correct values of life and an example of his having solved its problems in a successful manner. Attachment and possessive instincts have been the greatest obstacles in the attainment of spiritual peace and purification; and he gave them up in an ideal manner. Physical comforts are not an end in themselves; and Mahāvīra became a Nirgrantha, and went about practising severe penances, even without any clothes on his body. We have graphic description of his hardships given in detail in the Ācārāṅga, etc.: people abused him, boys pelted him with stones, and thus he was subjected to many calamities in the Eastern part of Bengal. After twelve years of rigorous penances, Mahāvīra had a triumph over physical weaknesses and limitations; and he attained pure and perfect knowledge which transcended the limits of space and time: he became a Kevalin, a Sarvajña. Śreṇika Bimbasāra was his contemporary and was ruling at Rājagṛha: Mahāvīra delivered his first sermon on the hill Vipulācala in the vicinity of Rājagṛha. For full thirty years he visited different parts of the country; and it was his Vihāra, or religious tour, as well as that of Buddha, that gave Magadhan territory the name of Bihar. Mahāvīra's parents belonged to the school of Pārśva; during his Vihāra, Mahāvīra explained to his society various problems of life and their solutions. He laid maximum stress on the sanctity and dignity of the spirit, and his preachings were meant for one and all who conformed to the religious discipline outlined by him. The organisation of his followers, including princes as well as poor peasants, conformed to the fourfold pattern consisting of Monks, Nuns, Householders and House-ladies: this nomenclature continues in Jainism even to this day. The influence of the great principles preached by Mahāvīra is seen in India even outside Jainism. He was a Tīrthankara, who prepared a ford for the suffering humanity to achieve peace here and bliss elsewhere. In view of the all-embracing character of Mahāvīra's principles, Samantabhadra, as early as *c.* 2nd century A.D., called the Tīrtha of Mahāvīra by the name Sarvodaya, which term is so commonly used now-a-days after Gandhiji. At the age of 72, Mahāvīra attained Nirvāṇa at Pāvā in 527 B.C.; and this day is celebrated with lights all over India as the Divāli Day.

A large amount of literature, both ancient and modern, is available on the

life and activities of Mahāvīra; and many myths, miracles and legends have grown about his personality, as usual with all religious dignitaries. Scientific and historical scrutiny unaffected by sectarian prejudice and religious bias is made difficult by the very nature of the sources from which the information has to be gleaned. What I have attempted above is a bare outline of Mahāvīra's biography. If it is difficult, or beyond the means of historical study, to know all about Mahāvīra, in my humble opinion, it is more important to understand and put into practice the principles preached by Mahāvīra than to discuss this detail or that about his personal life.

In this connection, you will excuse me, if I make a little digression of introducing to you some aspects of Vaiśāli (spelt as Vaishali), the birthplace of Mahāvīra. The town was at its height of prosperity, and by its association with Mahāvīra it became far-famed in the religious world of India. Teachers from Vaishali preached great principles for the uplift of humanity and lived an austere life of fasts and penances; and Mahāvīra stood out as the most prominent of his contemporaries. According to the Mahāvastu, Buddha sought his first teachers in Alāra and Uddaka at Vaishali and "even started his life as a Jain under their teachings." After discovering his Middle Path, he became more and more honoured at Vaishali, receiving even royal reception: the city built for him a Kūṭāgāra-śālā, a pinnacled rest house, in its suburban park known as the Mahāvana. It is at Vaishali that the Second Buddhist Council was held; and it came to be looked upon as a holy spot where differences in the Sangha could be ironed out. His celebrated disciple Āmrapālī was a resident of Vaishali at which place she bequeathed her park to Buddha and the community. Vaishali had its political significance too. It had a Republican Government, and King Cheṭaka, the Licchavi Republican President, 'organized a Federation of Republics comprising Mallakis, and 18 Gaṇa-rājas of Kāsīkosala, besides the 9 Licchavi Republics.' The working of the Vajjian Confederation, so vividly described in the Dīghanikāya, is an unique example of its kind and essentially contributed to the efficiency and solidarity of the Republic. Further Vaishali was a commercial capital where seals were issued by three classes of guilds, namely, Bankers, Traders and Artisans. When Fa-Hien visited India (A.D. 399-414), it was an important religious, political and commercial centre; but its fall began in the next three centuries, and what Hiuen-Tsang (A.D. 635) saw there was more or less in ruins. And to-day it is a neglected village.

The Indian Republic of to-day has inherited a great deal from the spirit of Vaishali, and the Vajjian concord is the pedestal of our Democracy, apart from the fact that Ahiṁsā with its corollaries, viz., Pañcaśīlas, is the bed-rock on which our policies are built. By adopting Hindī as the State Language, our Central Government is only carrying on the policy of Magadhan Governments which gave more importance to the language of the masses than to that of the classes. The inscriptions of Asoka are all in Prākrit. Our Prime Minister,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who said the other day that he can find time to meet the humblest in the country even in preference to his big officials easily reminds me of Asoka, the Priyadarśin, who had a similar dictum. Thus it is but natural that Vaishali can no more be neglected. Thanks to the vigilant eye of the Central Government, patronage of the Bihar Government, princely gifts of enlightened industrialists like Shri Shantiprasadji and the active efforts of the Vaishali Sangha with its able workers like Shri J. C. Mathur, Vaishali is rising up again. The Bihar Government have started a Post-graduate Institute there for Prākrit and Jaina studies, and Dr. Hiralal Jain is the first worthy Director of this growing Institute. We have no doubt that the place will be a great centre of learning.

Through the ravages of time and tide, and due to political vicissitudes Vaishali fell into ruins; and we had nearly forgotten its identity. But you will be pleased to hear that Vaishali has not forgotten its worthy sons. Among the Jaina and Buddhist relics, the most important remnant is a plot of fertile land, owned by a local significant family of Simha or Nātha Kṣatriyas, which is never cultivated, as far as the family memory goes, because for generations it is believed in the family that on that spot Mahāvīra was born and hence it is too sacred to be cultivated. It is a remarkable event in the religious history of India that the memory of Mahāvīra is so concretely kept at his birthplace by his kinsmen though 2500 years have quietly elapsed.

The period in which Mahāvīra lived was undoubtedly an age of acute intellectual upheaval in the cultural history of India; and among his contemporaries there were such religious teachers as Keśa Kambalin, Makkhali Gosāla, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Purāṇa Kassapa, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta and Tathāgata Buddha. Mahāvīra inherited a good deal from earlier Tīrthankaras. He left behind not only a systematic religion and philosophy but also a well-knit social order of ascetics and lay followers who earnestly followed and practised what he and his immediate disciples preached.

Buddha and Mahāvīra lived in the same age and moved about in the same area with the same dynasties and rulers in view. They stressed the dignity of man as man, and preached to the masses in their own language high moral ideals which advanced the individual on the spiritual plane and further contributed to social solidarity. To posterity, they are the best representatives of the Eastern or Magadhan religion, or what is generally called the Śramaṇic culture; the basic literature embodying their utterances, has luckily survived to us. A comparative study of the early Jain and Buddhist works presents a remarkable similarity and breathes verily the same religious and moral spirit which has not only stood the test of time for the last two thousand years and more but is also serving to-day as the master key to the solution of many a human problem. Truth and non-violence as preached and practised by the Mahātmā can be better appreciated against the background of the moral code

preached by Mahāvīra and Buddha. The references to the Nirgrantha tenets in the Pāli canon are of great value for assessing the relation of Jainism and Buddhism.

Apparently there was so much in common between Buddha and Mahāvīra, that early European scholars mistook them for one individual. But to-day, with the progress of studies, they stand before us as two distinct personalities who have left an abiding influence on the history of Indian thought. Buddha, it has to be noted, experimented with many teachers prior to his enlightenment, and discovered the Middle Path, after rejecting much of the religious thought current round about him. That was not the case with Mahāvīra. The religion preached by Vṛṣabha, Neminātha and his immediate predecessor Pārśva (who flourished just a couple of centuries before Mahāvīra) was already inherited by him and he presented it for contemporary society. Buddha is less compromising with the creeds of his contemporaries, because he started with the conviction that he had personally discovered something new for humanity. But Mahāvīra was more accommodating and compromising and quite willing to understand the point of view of others, primarily because he was preaching an earlier religion, maybe for a slightly different order of monks and laymen. "It is evident," as Jacobi has remarked, "that both Mahāvīra and Buddha have made use of the interest and support of their families to propagate their Order. Their prevalence over other rivals was certainly due in some degree to their connection with the chief families of the country." Buddha had a longer lease of life: he lived for full eighty years; while Mahāvīra lived only 72 years. The middle path of Buddha struck a note of novelty and inspired so much enthusiasm among his new followers that its influence spread far and wide. Mahāvīra, however, had to preach both to old and new followers, and obviously he must have been guided by a spirit of compromise: the question of new recruits was not with him as urgent as it was with Buddha. There is evidence, further confirmed by close similarity between Jaina and Buddhist monastic rules, that Buddha did try the Nirgrantha way of living for a while, obviously the one preached long before by Pārśvanātha. As observed by Jacobi "Nigaṇṭhas (Nirgranthas), now better known under the name of Jainas or Ārhatas, already existed as an important sect at the time when the Buddhist church was being founded." The Pāli canon refers to Mahāvīra as Nigantha Nātaputta. Both Mahāvīra and Buddha thus started their careers with the same capital of Śramaṇic ideology, but differed later on in details, and so also their followers with changing times and places. The subsequent history of Jainism and Buddhism, the former confining itself primarily to India but still surviving as a living institution and the latter spreading with remarkable zeal practically all over the Eastern hemisphere but losing its bearings in the very land of its birth, has its seeds to be sought in their earlier beginnings outlined above. It is absolutely necessary that the doctrines of Buddha and Mahāvīra be studied in more detail than

is done ordinarily by the educated man.

The history of the Jaina Church has many a bright spot here and there. After Mahāvīra the Church was led by a series of eminent monks and received patronage from kings like Śreṇika Bimbisāra, Chandragupta Maurya, etc. Many religious monks, ruling dynasties, wealthy traders and pious families have contributed to the stability and continuity of the Jaina Church with the result that India can feel proud of the Jaina contributions both to its civilization and culture in matters of art, architecture, literature and moral code.

The preachings of Mahāvīra are embedded in the canonical texts, and they are interpreted by series of commentaries known as Niryuktis, Cūrṇīs, Bhāṣyas and Tīkās. Individual topics are discussed in manuals and further illustrated by extensive narrative literatures. The doctrines are logically defended by a number of authors in comparison with and contrast to other Indian systems. Jaina contributions to Indian literature embrace various subjects; and they are spread in different languages like Prākrits (including Apabhraṁśa), Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, Old Hindi, Old Gujarāti, etc. Jaina authors have considered language only as means to an end; they never invested any one language with religious sanctity. Thanks to their broad outlook, they could make salient contributions to Sanskrit and Prākrit; and how they have enriched Tamil and Kannada, at least the learned audience here needs no further elaboration from me. Bühler wrote many years back about Jaina literature in this manner: "In grammar, in astronomy as well as in all branches of belles-lettres the achievements of Jainas have been so great that even their opponents have taken notice of them and that some of their works are of importance for European Science even to-day. In the South where they have worked among the Dravidian peoples, they have also promoted the development of these languages. The Kanarese, Tamil and Telugu literary languages rest on the foundations erected by the Jaina monks. Though this activity has led them far away from their own particular aims, yet it has secured for them an important place in the history of Indian literature and civilization." This prophetic observation of that great German scholar is not only fully borne out, but later finds and researches have also shown that if Bühler had lived today, he would have been more eloquent on the Jaina contributions to Indian Literature. With such meticulous care and perseverance the Jainas have preserved MS. collections in places like Jaisalmer, Jaipur, Pattan and Moodbidri that these are a part of our national wealth. They built these collections with such an academic and catholic outlook, that there was hardly any place for religious bias. It must be said to the credit of the builders of the great collections at Jaisalmer and Pattan that it is here that we could trace certain original Buddhist works which otherwise were known to us only from Tibetan translations.

A dispassionate and critical study of Jaina literature enables one to get a fair idea of the Jaina outlook or view of life. By the Jaina view of life we

mean the view of life sanctioned by Jainism as apparent from an objective and judicious interpretation of the fundamentals of Jaina metaphysics and ethics, and not the outlook on life which the followers of Jainism generally have to-day.

Metaphysically speaking, all souls, according to their stage of spiritual evolution or progress (in terms of Guṇasthānas) have a legitimate place on the path of religion; everyone's position is determined by his Karmic limitations, and his progress depends on his potentialities. The Jaina God is neither a Creator of the universe nor a dispenser of favours and frowns. He is a spiritual ideal, but also a being who has reached absolute perfection. If He is praised and worshipped, it is with a view to remembering His virtues, so that we may cultivate them in ourselves and attain the same status. Every soul must reap the fruits, pleasant or painful, of all it has done; for it is, in the last analysis, the architect of its own fortune. The question of exchanging one's sins or merits with any other soul is irrelevant. Now, clearly such an attitude does not leave one at the mercy of an outside agency, divine or semi-divine and enables one to work with confidence and hope. The individual, however criminal under the stress of internal and external forces, need not despair because he is latently divine, and a day will come when he will realize himself.

Jainism lays down certain ethical standards, which are duly graded, for the uplift of the individual as a social being. As long as he lives as a member of society, besides what he owes to himself for his spiritual betterment, he owes a good deal to the society in which he is living; but if he relinquishes the world and leads the life of an ascetic, his ties with society and his responsibilities towards it are considerably reduced. In Jainism, the duties of a householder are in miniature those of a monk; and a householder, while duly carrying out his household duties, rises steadily to the status of a monk.

Ahiṁsā is the most important principle that permeates the Jaina outlook on life. In simple language it means the greatest possible kindness towards the animate world. Jainism has prepared a graded series of living beings; and a religious person has to strive his best to minimise harm to them. Every living being has a sanctity and a dignity of its own; and one has to respect it as one expects one's own dignity to be respected. A man of kindly temperament sheds around him an atmosphere of kindness. Jainism has firmly held that life is sacred irrespective of species, caste, colour, creed or nationality. A resident of Hiroshima or Nagasaki is as sacred as one in New York or London: what his colour is, what he eats, and how he dresses—these are external adjuncts. Thus the practice of Ahiṁsā is both an individual and a collective virtue; and this kindly attitude, which requires that our hearts be free from baser impulses like anger, pride, hypocrisy, greed, envy and contempt, has a positive force and a universal appeal.

The second virtue which Jaina ethics lays stress on is good neighbourliness;

one should speak the truth and respect the right of property. It is thus that one becomes trustworthy in society, and at the same time creates an atmosphere of security for others. One's thoughts, words and acts must be consistent with each other; and they must, further, create an atmosphere of confidence and safety round about. It is no use being untrue to one's immediate neighbour and pretending to be highly cosmopolitan and benevolent towards people living beyond the seas. Individual kindliness, mutual confidence and a reciprocal sense of security must start with the immediate neighbour and then be gradually diffused in society at large, not only in theory but also in practice. These virtues can go to constitute coherent social and political groups of worthy citizens who yearn for peaceful coexistence with the well-being of the entire humanity in view.

The third virtue is a steady and progressive restraint on acquisitiveness which manifests itself either in the form of yearning for sensual or sex pleasure, or for acquisition of property. This virtue is to be practised in different degrees at different stages of one's spiritual or religious progress. An ideally religious man is entirely free from acquisitiveness in thought, word and deed; his last vestige of property is his body alone, and his wants are the minimum required to sustain it; and this too he voluntarily relinquishes in the end when he finds that it gives him no more aid in the practice of religion. Pursuit of pleasure is an endless game; individual inclinations and passions must be duly trained and curbed; thus indeed does one get mental poise and spiritual balance. A voluntary limitation of property is a community virtue which results in social justice and fair distribution of utility commodities. The strong and the rich should not weed out the weak and the poor but put such voluntary restriction on their instincts and possessions that the underprivileged too have a fair chance in life. Any attempt to enforce these qualities by an external and legal authority, either on the individual or society, will lead to hypocrisy or secret criminal tendencies. It is for sensible individuals to practise these virtues, and thus set an example from which an enlightened society will gradually be developed.

There are many elements which go to constitute the intellectual make-up of an individual: his inheritance, environment, upbringing, studies and experiences. It is this intellectual make-up that shapes his convictions and opinions: if he lacks in intellectual honesty and integrity of expression, these latter may get perverted. All these, moreover, get a different colouring according to the motives and ambitions of individuals, singly or collectively. This is why one finds that unanimity of opinion or agreement in views is very scarce. For most of us, even presuming that all of us are sincere, it is easier, nay almost natural, to differ rather than agree on any given topic. To meet this situation, Jainism has presented to the world two significant instruments of understanding and expression: one is the Nayavāda and the other, Syādvāda.

The Nayavāda enables one to analyse the various points of view and appraise their relative validity: it is a remarkable method for the analytical comprehension of a complex question. Naya is a particular approach. It reveals a partial or a particular view of the totality, and it should not be mistaken for the whole. A synthesis of these different viewpoints is an imperative necessity; therein every viewpoint must retain its relative position; and this need is fulfilled by Syādvāda. One can say 'yes,' or say 'no' or even express one's inability to state anything: these three basic statements, when combined, can give rise to seven predications which are qualified by the term '*syāt*' or 'may be,' indicating the limits of understanding and expression. Syādvāda, in course of the process of assertion or denial, curbs down and harmonises the absolute viewpoints of individual Nayas. "Syādvāda," says Professor A. B. Dhruva, "is not a doctrine of speculative interest, one intended to solve a mere ontological problem, but has a bearing upon man's psychological and spiritual life." It has supplied the philosopher with catholicity of thought, convincing him that Truth is not anybody's monopoly with tariff walls of denominational religion, while furnishing the religious aspirant with the virtue of intellectual toleration which is a part of that Ahiṁsā which is one of the fundamental tenets of Jainism.

Human beings have limited knowledge and inadequate expression. That is why different doctrines are inadequate; at the most they are one-sided views of the Truth which cannot be duly enclosed in words and concepts. Jainism has always held that it is wrong, if not dangerous to presume that one's own creed alone represents the truth. Toleration is, therefore, the characteristic of Jaina ideology. Even the Jaina monarchs and generals have a clean and commendable record to their credit in this regard. The political history of India knows no cases of persecution by Jaina kings, even when Jaina monks and laymen have suffered at the hands of other religionists of fanatical temper. Dr. Saletore has rightly observed: "The principle of Ahiṁsā was partly responsible for the greatest contribution of the Jainas to Hindu culture—that relating to toleration. Whatever may be said concerning the rigidity with which they maintained their religious tenets and the tenacity and skill with which they met and defeated their opponents in religious disputations, yet it cannot be denied that the Jainas fostered the principle of toleration more sincerely and at the same time more successfully than any other community in India."

Time was when man was at the mercy of nature; to-day, however, he has dived deep into the mysteries of nature and become her master instead of her slave. There is such rapid progress in the various branches of science; and the scientist's achievements in nuclear physics and atomic weapons are so astounding that, if he so intends, he can destroy the entire human race and change the face of the earth. Thus, to-day, the human race is standing on the verge of catastrophe;

its mind is getting befogged and bewildered; and it is rushing towards the very precipice which it wants to avoid. Obviously, we are required to revalue our values.

The progress of science is the corollary of an attempt to achieve greater happiness for man. But, unfortunately, man as man is not properly understood; and there is, too, a great deal of international misuse of language. By the term "man" many have only "the white man" in view; and such an attitude is subversive of all ethical standards. If some parts of the world are apparently more civilized, very often it is at the cost of the other parts. Cooperative and collective amelioration of the entire mankind has to take the place of colonial exploitation. The sanctity and dignity of mankind have to be recognised in preference to our separate affluence and supremacy. Scientific skill must be accompanied by a saint's wisdom. Thus man has to understand man as man. In this technically unified world, there is very little difference between oneself and others; if I wish well to myself, that is practicable, only if I wish well to others. The doctrine of Ahiṁsā, if rightly understood and sincerely practised, supplies the necessary basis for this humanitarian outlook of a world-citizen.

The organised atrocities of man need not make us despair. The doctrine of Karma tells us that we are the architects of our own fortune. It is for us to look into ourselves, analyse our motives, estimate our objectives, both individually and collectively, without slavishly prostrating ourselves before any power for fear or favour; and thus work on with confidence and hope that man must progress for his existence and betterment. Every individual has the potentiality of the divine, and it is for him to realise this by following the path of religion. Physical science and technical skill have given us power, and it is for us now to choose whether we want to make forward progress for the betterment of man and his environment or just reduce ourselves to a heap of radio-active ashes.

Good neighbourliness and restraint on the acquisitive instinct are a contagious virtue: what is true of an individual is also true of a group, social or political. The man who does not know himself and refuses to know another man as man can never live at peace with himself or, obviously, at peace with others. A clear understanding of oneself and of others can alone remove mutual suspicion and counter-balance the constant threat of war, thus leading us to a true condition of peaceful coexistence.

To-day, liberty of thought and speech is increasingly getting crippled in a subtle manner. Tendentious propaganda not only conceals but also perverts the apparent facts, and the world is put on a wrong track. This means that the thinking man has to keep himself vigilant, understand the limitations of his knowledge and thus learn to respect the viewpoint of others, as laid down by Nayavāda and Syādvāda. Let us not lose faith in man as man, and let us learn

to respect each other as man. We must see that man lives under healthy and progressive conditions as a world-citizen. The basic principles of Jainism (such as Ahiṁsā, Vratas, Nayavāda and Syādvāda), if correctly understood and earnestly put into practice, can make one a worthy citizen of the world.

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